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1. An extraordinary session of the Executive Committee of the Berlin SED was called 27 April to consider the results of the trade union elections in Berlin. Adolf Deter, SED expert on trade union matters, presented the following analysis.
2. "A mighty pressure was used in the western sectors of Berlin to frighten the workers and their leaders. Howley's summons of Comrades Litke and Matern had the same purpose. They and the party organization were to be cowed. The campaign against the FDGB by the UGO and the Americans ran hand in hand with the anti-SED and anti-Russian campaign. The FDGB has 700,000 members in Berlin, of whom at least 500,000 belong to no party. It is obvious that the great mass of the workers have no sense of their own power and succumb to this campaign of fear, threats, and whispers. This has even led to hesitation and wavering in our own party and it must be admitted that our opponent has succeeded in gaining a certain influence, and the attempts to split the working class in Berlin have led at the moment to such sharp battles that one is reminded of the pre-1933 era.

"In 1947 the occupying powers did, to be sure, interfere in trade union matters but without success, so that the majority of the workers turned against the occupying powers and the election brought a great victory for unity. That time we lost only two boroughs. In 1948 we underestimated the UGO, its organization, unity, and discipline; we also underestimated the leadership furnished the UGO by the Americans. The latter have furnished an example in the past weeks and months of how pressure can be exerted on union functionaries in their sector with all means and methods. Our functionaries were summoned to USMG; there they were given threats but also promises, and we must admit that with threats, promises, desires, and orders the Americans have succeeded in remaining in the background while pushing the UGO into the foreground. Our comrades were deceived by these tactics so that repeatedly the impression was created among our own comrades, 'These Americans are fine fellows actually'. They fail to realize that the UGO is acting on American orders which called for splitting up the workers' movement in 1947.

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"The UGO enjoys the full support of the Americans; it publishes two papers, has its own school, conferences, meetings, sends representatives to England, possesses a well-organized machine and a series of political workers who ride from meeting to meeting in American cars and are not afraid to speak openly and publicly. Unfortunately we cannot always say the same of our own comrades. The support the UGO obtained from the Americans made it possible for it to achieve a large and deep invasion in the western sectors. We have also suffered an invasion in the Russian Sector. The UGO not only managed to maintain its position in the large, important enterprises but strengthened it and also occupied a whole series of new positions. Out of 4,658 delegates, 2,569 are SED, 1,495 SPD, 35 CDU, and 959 non-party. The UGO has thus increased its percentage from 23-24% in 1947 to 32-33% in 1948. In addition we must remember that the UGO is strong in the big, important enterprises, whereas our strength is in the small and medium-sized plants. We must analyze the situation in every borough, especially the danger signals in Lichtenberg and Köpenick. In Lichtenberg we are in danger of losing the metal workers' union.

"We must show where and why we made mistakes, such as underestimating the UGO, and how far the current arrogance and carelessness are responsible for our defeat. There are too many ideological points on which our functionaries are not clear. This is obvious since they retreat before the arguments of the UGO. Many Berlin workers hope for results from the Marshall Plan; many think that conditions are worse in the Russian Zone than in the West. We have avoided these questions. Our functionaries have been afraid to distribute leaflets, announced speakers have failed to appear, resolutions agreed upon by us have not been introduced. The party work from the top to the bottom is unsatisfactory, it functions too slowly. Our magazine, Wille und Weg never reaches the functionaries until it is out of date.

"We must make our policies easier for the workers to understand. We are faced with the necessity of convincing our own party members of the correctness of our policy. It is not sufficient that our top officials simply sit in their offices. We must remember that 60% of the 24,000 works council members in Berlin do not belong to any party. We have reminded the party of this danger repeatedly but no improvement has been made. Since the last election we have been able to win over a grand total of 12 works council members to our party. That is an incredible figure. It shows that our party organization has no contact with the SPD and non-party workers. The result is that our factory groups are isolated from the mass of the workers. The FDGB has gained 200,000 new members during the past year. Naturally these people who come to us now, three years after the founding, just in order to get vegetables and ration coupons are not the most progressive people imaginable; nevertheless it is the task of the FDGB and of our party to win over these people to our policy. In 1947 10% of the trade union members were SED; in 1948 only 8%. The influence of our party has fallen. We have too few and too poor functionaries. Our instructors this year are worse. The boroughs are totally disorganized; thus one political instructor was put to work as a messenger-boy since the borough headquarters could find no one else for this mechanical post. All these things show that the niveau of our own comrades even in borough headquarters leaves much to be desired. We shall have to decide whether our present training plan and methods should not be seriously revised.

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"Our functionaries in the factories and enterprises are another problem. Their incompetence and wide-spread corruption has not strengthened the party. Corruption has arisen in the distribution of textiles, shoes, vegetables, etc. Because of the many cases of corruption, we have been unable to reap any political profit from this program for special aid to the workers; on the contrary it has meant further troubles for the party.

"We must attack these problems ruthlessly; we have nothing to lose, comrades, for we have already lost everything.

"The Berlin city conference will show 380 votes for us and 191 for the UGO. That is a big block and it includes all the UGO leaders, above all Suhr and Kaiser. The result shows that the UGO did not succeed in gaining a majority. Our task is not to let ourselves be pushed aside by the actual workers, to attempt to establish firm bonds with the SPD and non-party workers. The UGO decision to stage a separate May Day celebration makes our task harder. We must arrange for a large-scale marshalling service to keep our procession in order and insure that no troop bolts away during the march to the Lustgarten."

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